

Fisheries

Fisheries		FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007			Change From 2006 (+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Hatchery Operations & Maintenance							
	\$(000)	56,964	57,189	+727*	+3,209	61,125	+3,936
	FTE	457	457		0	457	0
Fish and Wildlife Management							
	\$(000)	57,604	59,299	+714*	-6,526	53,487	-5,812
	FTE	340	340		0	340	0
Total, Fisheries	\$(000)	114,569	116,488	+1,441	-3,317	114,612	-1,876
	FTE	797	797		0	797	0

* This reflects a permanent internal transfer not reflected in the Department of the Interior's support table. The Service's 2007 budget request includes this technical adjustment to correctly reflect this transfer.

Summary of FY 2007 Program Changes for Fisheries

Request Component	Amount	FTE
Program Changes		
• Hatchery Operations and Maintenance	+3,209	0
• Fish and Wildlife Management	-6,526	0
Total, Program Changes	-3,317	0

The FY 2007 budget request for Fisheries is \$114,612,000 and 797 FTE, a net program decrease of \$3,317,000 and 0 FTE from the 2006 enacted level. To align funding with the appropriate program, funds for fish health/whirling disease are being transferred between subactivities. The requested changes are discussed under the individual program element narratives.

The Service completed a permanent internal reprogramming for \$50,000 in the Fisheries' Resource Management Appropriation, under the authorities provided by the Service Manual, Series 253 FW 3. Funding was transferred from Hatchery Operations (1311) to Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance (1332). The reprogramming was necessary in order to reflect the location of funding for the Regional Mark Processing Center and reflects the appropriated distribution of funding and workload between the two subactivities. The reprogramming will not impact the Service's ability to meet production performance goals.

Program Overview

The mission of the Service's Fisheries Program is to work with partners to restore and maintain fish and other aquatic resources at self-sustaining levels, and to support Federal mitigation programs for the benefit of the American public. Since 1871, the Fisheries Program has played a vital role in conserving America's fisheries, and today is a key partner with States, Tribes, other Federal agencies, and private interests in a larger effort to conserve fish and other aquatic resources. The Program components, the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS), Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance (FWMA), and the Marine Mammals Program, consist of approximately 800 employees nationwide, located in 64 Fishery Resource Offices (including a Conservation Genetics Laboratory), 69 National Fish Hatcheries, 9 Fish Health Centers, 7 Fish Technology Centers, one Historic National Fish Hatchery, and the Marine Mammals Program office in Alaska. These employees and facilities provide a network that is unique in

its broad on-the-ground geographic coverage, its array of technical and managerial capabilities, and its ability to work across political boundaries and embrace a national perspective.

America's fish and other aquatic resources are among the world's richest and provide enormous social, economic, and ecological benefits to the Nation. Despite conservation efforts by the Service and its partners, many aquatic resources are declining at alarming rates. Almost 400 aquatic species either have, or need, special protection in some part of their natural or historic range. The reasons for these declines are linked largely to habitat loss and the impacts of harmful non-native species.

To better conserve aquatic resources in the face of increasing threats, the Service and its diverse partners and stakeholders refocused the Fisheries Program and developed a strategic vision, *Conserving America's Fisheries: Fisheries Program Vision for the Future*. The National Fisheries Program Draft Strategic Plan was developed as a logical extension of the *Vision*, providing strategies to implement the *Vision's* seven focus areas and performance measures and targets designed to track progress. All Fisheries Program goals are linked to outcome goals in the Department of the Interior Strategic Plan.

The following seven focus areas, each with associated goals, strategies, and performance targets, are detailed in the National Fisheries Program Draft Strategic Plan:

- Partnerships and Accountability
- Aquatic Species Conservation and Management
- Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management
- Public Use
- Cooperation with Native Americans
- Leadership in Science and Technology
- Workforce Management.

Achieving targets detailed in the Strategic Plan will help to sustain healthy fisheries and move toward restoration and recovery of imperiled species, including the ultimate goal of de-listing or downlisting aquatic species listed under the *Endangered Species Act*.

The Fisheries Program has developed and refined performance measures that reflect the purpose of the program, and performance targets that are realistic, ambitious, and achievable. Annual goals and performance targets have been incorporated into regional and national versions of the Fisheries Program Draft Strategic Plan. The Fisheries Information System (FIS) provides the basis for performance budgeting and accountability by tracking the Program's needs, accomplishments, and performance.

In 2004, NFHS personnel worked closely with DOI and OMB as it underwent its second PART review, and achieved a summary rating of moderately effective. The NFHS has made significant progress in improving its program purpose and design, strategic planning, program management and program results/accountability. In 2006, the entire Fisheries Program, including hatcheries, will be reviewed in a comprehensive PART.

The Service has asked the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council to conduct periodic, independent evaluations of the Fisheries Program as it implements the Draft Fisheries Strategic Plan. The SFBPC Team completed its first evaluation of the Fisheries Program in Spring 2005, and found the program "Effective" in conducting its aquatic resource management activities in FY 2004. The evaluation provided a list of valuable recommendations that will help the program further improve its effectiveness.

The Fisheries Program is working to become more habitat-based to target root causes of aquatic resource declines, and increase effectiveness in reversing declines. The program will re-orient its activities toward priorities identified through Fish Habitat Partnerships, under the guidance of the *National Fish Habitat Action Plan*. Through the Fish Passage Program, FWM accomplishes on-the-ground habitat restoration, and uses performance data to direct fiscal resources to Regions that consistently achieve results.

The *National Fish Habitat Action Plan* will be completed in March 2006 for full implementation in FY 2007. The Plan is the product of a diverse and rapidly growing partnership, led by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, to harness the energies, expertise, and existing partnerships of state and federal agencies and conservation organizations. The mission is to protect, restore, and enhance the Nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for the American people.